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## CHAPTER 5

# "THE THREE RELIGIONS"

### (1) *Ancestor Worship*

THE Chinese, it has been said, practise three religions; Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. The Min Chia, who have absorbed so much of the Chinese culture, also worship deities and practise rites which can be classified as Buddhist, Taoist and Confucian (or Ancestor Worship). But if one concludes from this that it is true to say that the Min Chia, or the Chinese, have three "religions", in the sense in which the word is understood in the West it would be a profound misapprehension of the real character of their beliefs. The educated classes, who are aware of the separate origin of the three systems, do not believe in any of them; the less educated, who practise the rites of all three, are not conscious of any such distinctions. In the Min Chia language, Buddhist Boddhisatvas, Taoist deities, local gods not in the Taoist pantheon, and ancestral spirits, are all described by one word, *ser*. The distinction between supernatural beings called *ser* and the ghosts of deceased persons, called *gur*, is the only one which is present in the mind of the ordinary Min Chia.

It would indeed be better, if it were possible, to forget the nomenclature and classification of religious beliefs derived from European studies of Chinese culture, since these introduce a false systematisation where no system exists, and create distinctions where none are known to the people themselves. The terms themselves are ill-defined and of such vague import as to be almost meaningless. Buddhism, when used to describe the Indian religion in its earlier phases, is a

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## CHAPTER 6

# "THE THREE RELIGIONS"

### (2) *The Gods*

FOR the Min Chia peasantry Buddhism means the worship of the greater Buddhist Boddhisatvas, who are thought of as gods, but gods with a specialised function. Kuan Yin for example is the Goddess of Mercy, the patron of women and mothers, and of fishermen. Yen Wang, the King of the Underworld, is worshipped and propitiated to secure the release of souls from hell. In practice all the other Boddhisavtas such as Manjusri and also Amida Buddha and Maitreya, the Buddha to come, have no separate temples of their own, but are accomodated in a shrine in the Kuan Yin temples. To the Min Chia to-day Buddhism is really nothing more than the cult of Kuan Yin, for this Boddhisatva has acquired an importance which completely overshadows Amida Buddha himself. Thus the only great festival which is specifically Buddhist is in honour of Kuan Yin at her temple south of the city on the 19th of the 2nd Month, a date corresponding approximately to the 31st of March.

This temple is a large building, or rather series of buildings round linked courtyards, entirely Chinese in style and decoration, and, though the site is old, the existing temple is quite modern. It was rebuilt about fifty years ago to replace the old one burned down by the Moslem rebels in the '70's. Since the great Buddhist monastery which once surrounded the Three Pagodas outside the North Gate shared the same fate, but has never been rebuilt, the Kuan Yin T'ang to the south of the city has become the principal

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## CHAPTER 7

# "THE THREE RELIGIONS"

### (3) *Magic and Myth*

776 IF the importance of their festivals and the size and flourishing condition of their temples be taken as criteria, the four most important gods of the Min Chia are Kuan Yin, the Boddhisatva, Lur Wa, the Dragon King of the Lake, Sai Sur the God of the Mountain, and Tung Yueh the Taoist King of the Underworld. But there are also a number of lesser deities some of whom have small temples, while others are only honoured with improvised shrines. As well as these there are the Ber Dser, the founder ancestors of each village, who of course have their temple in the village. Their cult is perhaps more in the nature of Ancestor Worship, although, as has been shown earlier, they are not necessarily the actual ancestors of the villagers.

The cult of K'uei Hsing, a stellar deity, is of Chinese origin. The Chinese constellation K'uei corresponds in part to the Great Bear of the West, and the deity who resides in this starry abode is in China a patron of literature. In the Ta Li district this cult has spread from other parts of Yunnan where it is well developed. K'uei Hsing is supposed to be also a slayer of demons and a protector against disease, and therefore his temple, always a two-storied detached tower, is built on the south west edge of the village, the side most exposed, according to Chinese belief, to evil influences. No festival is associated with K'uei Hsing, though his shrine is often found in the temples of the principal deities, and gets its share of incense at the festivals held there.

Ao Yu, represented on the eaves of temples as a fish with

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chicken feet, is to the local Chinese and Min Chia the god of the earth and therefore of the dreaded earthquakes. So vast is this monster of the deep earth that the mere twitching of one of the antennæ which grow above his eyes is sufficient to cause a major earthquake. No actual shrines to Ao Yu exist, but he is always represented prominently on the eaves and roof ridges of temples and gates (and even on the Moslem Mosque!) The cult appears to be the confusion of two things, one the chicken footed monster of Buddhist mythology, and secondly the Chinese Atlas, also called Ao, but who to the Chinese is a turtle and carries the world on his back.

Two minor deities connected with the lake seem to have functions which impinge on those of Lur Wa the Dragon King. Tai Po, a Chinese name meaning the Great Mother, or Venerable Lady, has a small tumbledown shrine on the shore of the lake at the village of Shier Yu. No image of the deity exists, but a tablet with the name "Tai Po" stands upon the fire-blackened altar, and is flanked by tablets bearing the names of two minor dragon spirits, the water dragon and the fire dragon, who do not otherwise appear in other temples. The cult of Tai Po is confined to women, and men informants were even unable to say exactly what the functions of this deity were, but it would seem that Tai Po is a wind goddess, and her shrine by the lake shore is appropriate in this case. Women, apart from the usual acts of worship, the *k'e t'ou* and incense burning, also sacrifice a fowl at this shrine from time to time.

The cult of Gu Lao—a Min Chia name of unknown meaning—is confined to the boat people and the villages of the eastern shore from which these folk mostly come. It would appear to be a variant of the Lake Dragon cult, perhaps a less official version. Gu Lao is a spirit, according to some the spirit of a long dead mortal, who from time to

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776 time manifests himself in the shape of a short snake. It is stated that Gu Lao thus appears when stormy weather is expected, and is found on one of the boats, never on land. The boatmen then immediately sacrifice a chicken or even a pig, but only the head of the victim is offered to Gu Lao, who thereupon dives overboard, and the weather improves. The boatmen will not sail unless this rite has been performed if Gu Lao has been seen on a ship. Unfortunately his appearances are rare and I was never able to witness the rite, or to catch a glimpse of Gu Lao in his snake shape. It is, however, a fact that the people of the eastern shore never call a snake by the usual word, but always call it "Gu Lao". One may observe that in other parts of China also the snake is regarded as a dragon in disguise, or what one might call in "undress uniform". Eels are common in the lake and there are also water snakes, the chance discovery of these in the bilge of a boat or close by in the shallows is probably the foundation of the Gu Lao legend.

776 778 Apart from these named and personified deities there exist a large number of "*ser*" that is, spirits, who are associated with various places or ancient monuments. Thus the god of the roads is worshipped at numerous cross roads by simply burning a stick of incense at the foot of a tree or a stone. Wells and springs, especially the very hot spring of sulphurous water near Erh Yuan city north of Ta Li, are often regarded as under the care of a *ser*, who is worshipped in the usual way, by burning incense. The hottest spring near Erh Yuan is in fact regarded as sacred and no evaporation of sulphur is carried on there, instead it is surrounded with incense sticks and paper flags, a form of worship which may perhaps owe something to imitation of Tibetan prayer flags. Certain large rocks scattered over the lower slopes of T'sang Shan, some of which have in past times had Buddhas engraved on them, are now regarded as sacred,

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usually acting as shrines to the Mountain God, whose name is sometimes chiselled on a smooth face. The enormous evergreen trees called by the Chinese *tung ching shu*, "Winter Green Tree", a kind of ilex (*ilex pedunculosa*), which are planted near temples and in villages, also come in for a share of incense burning, though no one can positively say whether the tree is itself sacred, or merely the home of another spirit such as the Road God.

Another sacred spot, associated with sacrifices for recovery from illness, is the tomb of the Mongol soldiers of Kublai Khan outside the West Gate, near one of the Nan Chao pagodas. The tomb, the common grave of all who fell at the capture of Ta Li by Kublai, is a large mound surmounted by a more modern stone tablet which records its history. At this place persons who are sick, or who are acting on behalf of a sick relative, burn incense, and sacrifice a fowl, which is then cooked and eaten on the spot. Part of the rite is to break a pottery bowl on the stone base of the tablet erected by the Ming Emperor Hung Wu, which records his conquest of Yunnan from the Mongol Yüan dynasty a century later. This tablet stands close to the Mongol tomb, and is now surrounded by a large mound of broken potsherds, testimony to the antiquity of this rite. No one can give any reason for the association of these two monuments with the healing of sickness, nor do any precise ideas of the agency invoked exist. No god is connected with the two places, and there seems to be no reason why the spirits of Mongol soldiers and their Ming successors should be supposed to have healing powers.

Not very far from the Mongol Tomb and Ming Tablet there is another monument of Kublai Khan, the great stone tablet on a stone tortoise which records at length his conquest and pacification of Yunnan. This monument is well known and its character is familiar to every educated per-

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son. It is in no way a religious monument, even though it has three marble Buddhas carved on the reverse side of the pediment. But to the peasants the stone tortoise has become some kind of spirit with the diverse powers of a god of wealth and a healer of eye diseases. The rites performed here are curious. At the New Year those who desire to increase their wealth in the coming year break small copper cash on the back of the tortoise and scatter the pieces around it, as usual burning incense sticks before the deity. Those who suffer from eye trouble take copper coins and twist them in the eye sockets of the tortoise, or rather in the holes where once the eyes existed, for the long performance of the rite has hollowed out the hard granite to a considerable depth.

A large number of these more informal rites not connected with the worship of any recognised deity are intended to alleviate sickness. The Min Chia, though not unaware of the theory of infection and contagion, as their beliefs about leprosy show, still think that religious rites are an effective preventive against epidemics. When there is sickness in the town, usually typhus or typhoid, it is customary to erect a shrine in the street, where musicians play and chant sutras before an altar spread with sweetmeats and flanked with incense burners, as in the New Year festival at a private house. The shrine is moved further up the street after two days and the rites repeated until the entire length has been purified. The householders subscribe to defray the expenses. The same rites are performed if a ghost has been seen in a street, for this is regarded as ill-omened for the inhabitants. Cactus leaves are pinned up on the door lintels during times of sickness, and it is believed that the spirits of disease will not enter a house so protected.

The Min Chia and the Yunnanese Chinese also will never eat the eggs of hens kept by lepers, for it is believed that if

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the Israelites themselves up to the time of the captivity. If opinion does differ somewhat as to the exact character it assumed, whether among the Canaanites or the Israelites, the fact remains that they both did worship the Deity or deities in such sanctuaries.

The Canaanites had their mountain groves or high-places with a stone pillar or pillars in each, a tree or sacred pole, an altar and carved images of their gods. This is borne out from the command of Moses to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 12; 3: "Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree: and ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place." Then in Deuteronomy 16; 21 a further command is given: "thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the Lord thy God, which thou shalt make thee. Neither shalt thou set thee up any image; which the Lord thy God hateth." The Israelites to begin with obeyed these commands, but worship in high places persisted. The prophet Samuel sacrificed there. The sanctuary at Gibeon, where Solomon once offered a thousand offerings, was called a high place. And the godly King Jehoshaphat, who turned not aside from what was right in the eyes of the Lord, yet did not hinder the people from burning incense in the high places. The Israelites, however, in times of religious relapse so restored the Canaanitish manner of worship that Ashera, the Hebrew term for grove, came to represent as well the images and pillars introduced therein.

798 171 The Chiang make no representation, carved or hewn, of Deity but they publicly worship Him in a sacred grove high up on a mountain side or a mountain top. In the grove there is a sacrificial altar built of unhewn stones. Behind the altar grows a sacred tree which is an essential part of the sanctuary. Between the tree and the altar, or on the altar, stands a white stone of glistening purity, generally of quartz. Such a grove it will be noted is more elaborate in its contents than that recognised by the orthodox Israelites, yet has nothing of the corruption of that of the Canaanites. Essentially, this mode of worship, it will not be denied, suggests oneness of origin with both Canaanite and Hebrew, and brings down to us, does it not, a primitive form of Semitic worship in the dress of hoary antiquity? Doubtless the Canaanites did not originally have the corruptions that later characterised their groves and called forth the divine displeasure. Their cult, apparently, was a mixture of Semitic observance and Sumerian superstition.

● 776 The Chiang, more honourable than the Canaanites, have maintained their monotheism comparatively unsullied, and have given us an example of religious constancy to be found, apart from the Jews, in no other people.

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778 822 The use of a sacred White Stone is a leading feature of Chiang worship. It is set up both in the groves and on the roofs of their houses. In the grove it stands above the altar of sacrifice; on the roof it is placed ever the middle of the battlement above the back wall. The Deity is not supposed to reside therein and it is not, therefore, worshipped. The Stone is sacred, in the first place, because of its whiteness. Whiteness betokens goodness in contrast to blackness, which betokens evil. Its colour thus symbolises the holiness of God who hates evil and loves good. It is sacred, secondly, because it reminds men that he is the natural Rock or Mount of their strength. That God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and that he is the Rock Source of all good and blessing, constitute the twin fundamental tenets of their belief.

778 The Stone requires to be conical or mount-like in shape and set up as found in its natural or unchissled state. Occasionally small white stones are placed around its base but these have no religious meaning. The significance of the Stone itself is the continual intimation it makes that God may only be approached by the way of holiness, and is only found when men respond to this demand of his character. As a monument on the house top it bears an unambiguous witness that those who dwell under it are a people who recognise the God of Heaven as their God, and are willing to serve him according to the immemorial customs of their fathers.

• 778 It will be seen from this that the religion of the Chiang is not one of stone-worship. To speak of it as such is to talk at random and gives a misleading impression. Some who want to believe that it is, because the affirmation sounds sensational, are the worst offenders. They prate about the White Stone worship but they have nothing to support the assertion except ignorant hear-say, or wilful misrepresentation. The Chiang are not animists. They know whom they worship and they do not worship him ignorantly. This requires to be said because already it has been stated far and wide that the Chiang worship the White Stone. A foreign journal once announced that the tribes people worshipped a white stone. The news was sensational; that was the effect desired. Truth, therefore, went by the board. Now, litholatry is a big word. It has a scientific or learned sound. The mere use of it is supposed to be ample proof that the Chiang are litholatrists, and the proving of this is necessary to be able to say they are animists—another big word. The Israelites had two sacred stones in their Holy of holies. Were they litholatrists? They lifted up their eyes unto the hills from whence came their help. Did they worship the hills? Did they not expressly state at the same time that their help came from Jehovah who made the Heaven and the earth? Let us be as just to the Chiang as we are to the Israelites.

It is useless to say that one was told by the Chinese that the Chiang worshipped the White Stone. The Chiang themselves deny

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that they do. This should be enough. At the same time some of the ignorant among them may say that the White Stone is their "Pu-sa." Yet the same man tells you that he worships God and none other. In his mind there is no contradiction. The fault is yours if you fail to understand him. Certain words to him have a different meaning than to you. He speaks Chinese as a secondary language. Then he is talking down to you. He is pitying your ignorance and with his imperfect Chinese gives a wrong impression to the listener who has not wit enough to understand this. For instance, a tribesman may call his photograph his "pu-sa." But he knows enough that it is only a likeness. Though he uses this name for it that would not justify any one saying he worshipped himself, i.e. his own likeness, and is therefore, to be scientifically classed as an animist.

Sacred stones in primitive times were very comman. They were used in many different places in many different ways. In some instances they appear to have been worshipped. Few doubt that the Canaanites did. But no *true* Israelites did. The interest to us of the Chiang use of the White Stone is in the reflex light it throws on the use of memorial and covenant stones by the Hebrews. Jacob set up the stone that served as his pillow to mark the site where Jehovah appeared to him in promise and blessing. There he made his vow and from there he started on his journey with the assurance that the all-seeing eye of a gracious Providence watched over him for good. The stone was a mark, a memorial and a sign of his vow. For to him Heaven had opened in that place, and it was given him to see there a ladder of intercourse between earth and Heaven, very dreadful but very reassuring. We shall yet see that the Chiang hold almost identical views regarding their Stone which brings into fine relief those of the patriarchs.

Jacob in his dying blessing to Joseph spoke of the Mighty One of Jacob who caused his bow to abide in strength and made his arms strong when he was grieved and shot at by his persecutors. The God of his father "from whence came the Shepherd and Stone of Israel, should help him and bless him with the blessing of Heaven above and of the deep that croucheth beneath." Obviously in Jacob's mind the Shepherd of Israel and Stone at Israel were one. In his own case he speaks of this Shepherd and Stone as the Angel who redeemed him from all evil. It was he who spoke to him in Paran; He, who as a man, wrestled with him at the Jabbok and by whom he uttered his parting blessings on his sons. The Chiang do not explicitely speak of their Stone as Shepherd or Angel but they do speak of an Angel or God-sent man who acts for them in their approach to God at the altar where the Stone stands. The Chiang and Hebrew concepts are so closely allied that they may be called alike in everything but the terminology.

It was on, Sinai, the Mount of cloud and fire that Jehovah revealed himself to the Israelites and made known his Voice to

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778 The altar is the third great requisite in Chiang worship.
171 Often it is a platform of earth faced with natural shaped stone. Or it may consist of a slab of stone resting on other stones. But of whatever form, the stone or stones used must remain unhewn. No human shaping is permissible. Any cutting or polishing of the stones defiles them for use in the divine altar.

Occasionally a flat rock *in situ* is utilized. Such, of course, answers the natural requirement. The approach to Deity may not be of human design or of man's invention. The approach is divinely provided apart from the worshipper's help or contrivance.

At the base of Mount Sinai after the reception of the Ten Words, the Israelites had instructions conveyed to them of a corresponding nature. In sacrifice an altar of earth was to be raised, but if stone were used no tool should be lifted upon it, for that should defile it. Here is one of the many touches of intimacy in the practices of the two peoples that call for mutual consideration and comparison.

778 The Grove. The Tree, the White Stone and the Altar together constitute the Chiang sanctuary in the High Place. All are Sacred. One is not without the other. None of them is worshipped but all form essentials in the approach of man to God *and of God to man.* Account for the origin of these ideas as one may, we cannot deny their existence, or refuse to believe that the Chiang themselves give full credence to the tradition of their divine establishment.

A High Place is not chosen, as might be supposed, merely for its commanding elevation. It is rather chosen because they think of God as dwelling on high in the Heavens; and ascent to his altar gives natural expression of their desire to meet him. Up on the mountain side in the heart of a grove the world is shut out and the soul shut in with God. Nothing intervenes between man and his Creator. Here amid unspoilt surroundings, in the true Sanctuary of nature, the Father Spirit is pleased to meet with the humble suppliants of His grace.

778 Those who doubt this have to explain why the Chiang worship
782 takes place at night. There is nothing then to be seen but the starry lights of Heaven. Absolute stillness reigns. Distraction is far removed. The whole thought is centred on the act of worship. Only a true seeker after God cares to make the climb. To him the darkness of the night is no deterrent, the risk of inclement weather no hindrance. The securing of the divine Presence is the great quest of his soul. Into his own moral darkness he wants the light of God to shine.

● 776 The Chiang have two names for God: "Abba Chee" or "The Father Spirit" and "Ma-Be Chee" or "Heavenly spirit". The first is the more common, and beautifully expressive. God is the Father of all personality or spirits of men. How fundamental this is to all true religious belief it only takes an instant to realise, and

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makes the Christian reflect again how Christ's teaching of God as the Heavenly Father is the beauty and the strength of Christianity. The Chiang idea of God makes a wonderful forerunner to that greater one, which Christ gave to men.

God, in his nature, is thought of as spotless in holiness or purity, and in his character as the righteous governor of the universe. He searcheth the hearts of men. He finds out if they are white or black, i.e. good or evil. To the repentant suppliant he extendeth sacrificial mercy; to the evil doer retribution according to his iniquity.

The White Stone and the altar provide tangible evidence of these conceptions. Since God is holy, the sinner may not approach him before he is ceremoniously cleansed. A sin-bearer is, therefore, necessary to remove his sin. On it falls the divine judgement. A spotless bullock, or lamb or fowl is the victim. When its blood has been shed the way is open for prayer and supplication.

The origin of this crucial ceremony no Chiang can give. It has been observed, all say, from time immemorial. They regard it as an all-important divine requirement. Aged priests, deep in the religious lore of their race, which is handed down from generation to generation, unanimously maintain this. The whole purpose of sacrifice, they say, is the removal of sin to secure the divine blessing. Its substitutionary character is never questioned but strenuously maintained. Without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin, and apart from that even the priests dare not presume to pray.

It is useless for any one to try to discount this belief of theirs. Some who, from prejudice, would fain read out of it this substitutionary meaning charge us with reading into it preconceived ideas of sacrifice taken from the Old Testament. But love of the truth must state exactly what the facts are. And it is not fiction but fact that the Chiang do thus interpret the meaning of their sacrifices. God, they believe, meets them at the altar, and no where else, because there sin is cleansed away.

That salvation by substitution happens to be an Old Testament and a New Testament doctrine only enhances the interest of the Christian in the Chiang ritual. Yet the interest or the wonder does not end here. There is something more wonderful still, so wonderful, that at first, one can hardly believe his ears when he is told of it. They solemnly assert that their sacrifices are only provisional: they are but the semblances of a supreme sacrifice yet to come. How can the critic account for this? Let who will question the asseveration, the proof again is overwhelming.

A divine agent is to come from Heaven to be The Great Sin-Bearer. When he appears the reality of their sacrifices will be accomplished. This future Sin-Bearer even now comes as an unseen Presence to the Grove to put through their petitions for

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them. He is regarded as the Interpreter of all that takes place in the sacred grove and as The Agent who mediates between them and God.

At every sacrifice, accordingly, the priest has a sacred symbol of his presence, and this symbol is given a personal name. It is a roll of white paper in the form of an ancient book. Every priest guards his Roll with the most zealous care and regards it with the utmost veneration. No stranger is allowed to see it and no worshipper may even touch it. Neither will any priest tell an outsider of its existence. Without the presence of the Roll all sacrifice would be in vain. For it signifies the virtual Presence of the Heaven-Sent-One at the altar. Indeed he and the sacrifice are one.

[212] Originally the Chiang had their own scriptures, or writings. With the loss of the knowledge of letters, what was once a sacred roll of their law is now only a mere cylinder of white paper. But it preserves the form. It represents the reality. This explains their veneration for it. The roll denotes the spiritual nature of their offerings to the Father of spirits. They are offerings of righteousness consummated by the Heaven-Sent-One through his death for man's sin.

That he has to die for this purpose the priests take care to signify in a very unusual way: a small skull, or death's head, is inserted in the upper end of the sacred Roll. No one unitiated in the mysteries of the white religion would ever guess its meaning there. A second look has to be taken before indeed it is seen. The figure of death is embedded in the volume. This intimation is so plain that it is unmistakable. Even though it be surmised that the roll was originally without this tangible interpretation of its meaning, nevertheless the innovation reveals plainly the thought of the death of the Sin Bearer from Heaven as commonly held by all Chiang priests.

The writer has one of these rolls with the death's head in his possession. At the decease of an old priest who had it, a Christian Chiang secured it for us from his family.

The messianic message in the fortieth Psalm strikingly corresponds in thought to this age long aspiration of the Chiang, as evidenced in their Sacred Roll, and the mind of the man must be very dull that does not marvel at the closeness of the correspondence. "Sacrifice and offering", it says, thou hast no delight in; mine ears thou hast opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo I am come; in the Roll of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart". (R. V.)

The name of the divine Sin Bearer is also arresting: it is so like that of Jesus. The sound varies in different localities but the correspondence is close. In one place it is "Nee-Dsu", in a second "Je-Dsu," in a third "Rhe-Dsu" and so on. This can be put

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796 191 down to coincidence, of course, but its designation can hardly be that. It is known as Abba Malah. Abba means Father: here, the Father in Heaven. Malah is not known other than as a name. They do not seem to be able to define or explain the term, But the pronunciation is very precise. The "lah" is spoken with a definite click, so much so that it is virtually Malak, the Hebrew word for Angel. Have we not in this another strong indication of the Semitic origin of the Chiang religious beliefs?

In connection with this Sacred Roll and angel-Sin-Bearer or Redeemer the student of scripture inevitably recalls the many instances in the Old Testament of the mysterious angel-visitant appearing as God in human form to patriarchs, prophets and saints in times of stress and difficulty. By Isaiah he is called "the Angel of His Presence who saved them ":" in His love and in His pity He redeemed them, and He bare them, and carried them all they days of old. (Isaiah,. 62; 9). In Malachi, 3; 1, "He is called the Lord whom ye seek, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in."

This delight of the Israelites for their Malak or Messenger of the covenant has a remarkable parallel in the fondness of the Chiang for their Abba Malah or Je-Dsu. They speak of Him in the possessive sense. The prefix of "ga-gee" goes with His name: "Ga-gee Je-Dsu" they say. The sentiment is that of the Christian hymn, "My Jesus I love thee, I know thou art mine."

Among Chiang Christians when the hymn "Jesus loves me" is sung the use of their own name "Je-Dsu" in place of the Chinese "Ye-Su" adds great zest to the singing. Every face then shines —every face is, as it were, a glistening white Stone.

796 At festival times the sacred roll is carried by the priest to the grove on a platter, where its base is embedded or planted in seed wheat. The emphasis is on the seed. The interpretation is not far to find when taken with the use to which this seed wheat is put. It is that death forms the prelude to life, a belief which the Chiang firmly hold. This will become plain as we proceed.

In some places the seed-wheat is carried separately to the grove, but at the grove the sacred roll is placed in it.

Where strict orthodoxy prevails there are three religious festivals in the year. The first occurs at their old New Year time, which falls on the first day of the tenth moon of the Chinese calendar. The second comes in the Summer and the third in the Autumn. But the dates vary according to the locality and even may be changed a little, as exigencies of weather and social conditions indicate.

In numerous places now only one religious festival is held in the year; in other places two. Uniformity has lapsed. Even in exact ritual procedure it is not found. One district has preserved customs and conceptions that another has let go or forgotten.

783 For private sacrifices there is naturally no set time. These

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old zeal and fire have insensibly diminished. Even in the present generation we ourselves have watched this decline make definite progress. Old priests from whom we learnt much of what is here given have died off, and their successors, while performing the motions of the ritual, have not shown half the knowledge of its inner meaning their sires did. Their surroundings have not lent them the inspiration they required to maintain the old time brilliancy of their religion.

With regard to the spiritism adopted in some quarters, the young priests are alleged to pass through a trance at their initiation. A spirit then is supposed to possess them, taking complete possession for the time being of their faculties. After this possession is over they are physically limp or half-exhausted until their strength is regained.

On the other hand, it is alleged that this is not always the case. The possession by the spirit is not real but simulated. An old priest instructs them how to feign the usual phenomena so that their reputation should not come behind others in having authority over occult powers.

Such as do have real experience with spirits profess to be able to call up these unseen personalities at will. By ways known to themselves they secure their aid or release from harmful influences. After a death, if the priest be up to his job, the spirit can lead back the departed soul under leash to his old home for a visit in a manner similar to the way shown in street processions of the actors of the Buddhist temple of hell.

In one district the priests carry, hung from their girdles, a bunch of ludicrously weird objects called the *Te-sa-a-ga*. Anything that is curious or strange enough or suggestive may find a place in the collection. Together they make a rare rattle for the ignorant and the gullible. You may see an eagle's bill, a cock's foot, a wild boar's tusk, a goat's horn, a bit of bone, a cymbal, deer's teeth, a Chinese charm cash, or a rare shell. Each object proclaims the exorcist powers of its possessor. With these by his side no one can doubt his ability to recall the soul in sickness, undo demoniac powers and save you in general from the evil eye.

Incidentally they prove a god-send to the sensationalist wiseacre. With these to shake in front of his audience, who dare doubt now that the Chiang are litholatrists, animists and demon worshippers! Seeing is believing? His case is proven. And he struts around as pleased with himself as the man who wears the lot at his belt.

He, however, who knows something of the genius of the beautiful old Chiang religion groans within himself at the sight of such things. How have the best become the worst? The *Te-sa-a-ga*, once pure as the morning light, has fallen from its high estate. We believe we hold the key to its primitive significance but must meanwhile wait before giving its solution. Sufficient here to say

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The tribes people in Lifan have no social center or community center, not to say theaters, cinemas, or dancing halls. But they have a custom of dancing around the fire. The kitchen is the social center. This is because of the low temperature even during the summer nights, and because they are free only in the evenings. During festivals or on special occasions they all gather in the kitchen of their ruling house, dancing and singing around the fire. A wine pot is passed round and round among the dancers. It is the special duty of a servant of the host and hostess to stand by, whose sole duty it is to fill the wine pot as soon as it gets empty, and the pot seems to be empty all the time.

They are very fond of wine. It is home-made wine, made of barley. Rich or poor have big pots of wine. It is made of the raw materials most accessible to them, and it is one of the few stimulants they have. Some of them drink wine as if they were drinking water. It is the custom to offer wine to people who are starting off on a trip. When we were leaving Ma-o in the Black River region the wife of the T'ou-jen 頭人 or leader carried a big bucket of wine, and we were asked to take out our rice bowls and drink with them, for they did not have enough bowls for us. The more one drinks the more courteous one is. Even among the Gia-rung people around Cha-ku-nao the same custom holds.

## G. CUSTOMS IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

The mountains are precipitous, and Nature is magnificent but fearful. People are living at the mercy of their climatic and geographical environment. Therefore, like all primitive people, they believe that there is a spirit in everything; they are animists. They have heaven gods, earth gods, cow gods, horse gods, water gods, tree gods, mountain gods, and a whole lot of other gods. In some temples they have a conglomeration of gods collected from various sects of religious beliefs and shelter them under the same roof, and worship them in a mass. They are very tolerant about religious beliefs, and they worship everything and every god that comes their way, and they think their gods must be very tolerant of each other too. Their whole lives are chained by superstition. Among people of the Lama faith, twice a year they have the "Dancing God Ceremony" 跳神會, once at the end of the year as a farewell to the old year, and once in the early spring to welcome the new year. In August an out-of-door play is given as a thanksgiving to the gods for their harvest.

The center of social activities among the Ch'iang people is the religious teacher. He is present at nearly all occasions, such as when people are sick, when people are moving, when people are happy, and when they want to give thanks. Besides, he is the chief actor at the four most important occasions of the community. First is the ceremony around the beginning of May, when the snow is disappearing and the frozen soil is softening. One sheep is sacrificed to the mountain god for the opening of the mountain, for from henceforth people can go to the mountain for sowing, for gathering fuel, and for digging. The second occasion is around the beginning of July. It is a ceremony in which

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789 educated or scientifically trained, and they assume that they see in these events the working of mysterious forces that may do good or harm. The priests, the gods, the ceremonies and the sacred implements are surcharged with mysterious power with which he seeks to control events, warding off calamities and enabling him to enjoy a successful and satisfying life, in which the basal needs of food, sex, clothing to protect from the cold, shelter from the forces of nature and protection from enemies, numerous descendants etc. are satisfied, and one can enjoy a successful and happy life.

3. The Gods.

776 The Ch'iang are not monotheists, and there is no certain evidence that they ever have been. The priest at Mu Shang Chai, who is a relative of the deceased Christian pastor Kou P'in-shan, stated that in his ceremonies he worshipped besides the greatest god twelve other gods. At Lung Ch'i Chai we saw two different shrines on housetops where the large white stone was surrounded by twelve smaller stones. In the sacred grove at Lung Ch'i Chai there are four different shrines to four different gods. By persistent enquiry we learned that in some of the villages the Ch'iang have five major gods and twelve minor gods, not counting a goodly number of Chinese gods that are found in Ch'iang homes, in wayside shrines, and in Chinese temples. In addition to making enquiries in several different localities, we have translated, as well as possible considering our very limited knowledge of the language, enough of the chants of two different priests to assure ourselves that they worship a number of gods. In one of the chants the different gods are named in order as we will give them below, and called upon to come and assist the priest. While we must make allowance for variations in different localities, we can be sure that they are not monotheists and worship more than one deity.

[177] The supreme god is called Mu Byei Sei (mv bjei sei), Mu Bya Sei, M Ta Bei, M Bya, Sei, Ma Byei Ch'i, and at least at Tung Men Wai, Lung Ch'i Chai and Mu Shang Chai where Christian influence has been strong he is often called Abba Ch'i or Abba Sei. Abba means father and it may be applied to any god. On the other hand a number of Ch'iang have asserted that Abba Ch'i or Abba Sei is properly used only to designate Chinese gods in Chinese temples. The first two syllables, Ma bei, mu bya, or m bya, mean sky and sei

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or ch'i means god. Literally it means sky god. This idea is closely related to that of T'ien 天, meaning sky, God of the Sky or Heaven, of the Chou dynasty Chinese, and it must be remembered that the Ch'iang lived close enough to the Chou about 1121 B. C. to unite with them in the conquest of the Shangs.[1] At present many of the Ch'iang identify Mu Bya Sei with Yu Huang Shang Ti 玉皇上帝, the highest god of the Taoists, and also with the Christian God. Mu Bya Sei is the greatest of all gods, is righteous and pure, controls everything everywhere in heaven and on earth, requires righteousness among men, protects men and domestic animals, gives rain and good crops, and helps people secure children and a numerous posterity. 776

The supreme god is worshipped near sacred white quartz stones, called in different localities lu sha, lu ts'a, lo p i etc. Its whiteness symbolizes the purity and righteousness of the god. The white stone is sacred and holy, and near it communion with the god is natural and easy. Not every white quartz stone is sacred. It must be the right shape, somewhat pointed at the top and with a wide base on which it can stand upright. The sacred white stone has superhuman power, and for this reason it is placed on top of graves, and on walls in front of doors to keep demons from entering the house. Generally the sacred white stone is not identified with Mu Bya Sei, but we have met some individuals who have affirmed that the white stone is Mu Bya Sei. The use of sacred white stones is widespread in Si K'ang, eastern Tibet, and among the tribespeople of western Szechwan. 778 776 823

The sacred white stone is used as a place of worship on the top of every house, at the rear and in the center, on the highest point of the back wall. Below it is a small platform and a hole for burning incense. Here Mu Bya Sei is worshipped by the men of the household. Another sacred white stone is found in the temple in or near the sacred grove, and still another on the shrine near the sacred tree or trees in the sacred grove.

A second god is Abba Mula(a· ba· ma la·), mo lo sei (mo· lo· sei) or abba mo lo sei. Near Tung Men Wai, Lung Ch'i Chai, and Mu Shang Chai he is sometimes called Ndjei Tsu or Nyei Su. No priest is without this god, for without it he would be powerless. It is his patron or guardian deity and instructor. This god consists of the skull of a goldenhaired monkey wrapped into a round bundle in sheets of white paper. Inside are also dried pieces of a golden- 776

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776 haired monkey's lungs, liver, intestines, lips, and finger-nails. Its eyes are often old cowry shells. It is so wrapped that the face of the skull is visible at one end. The priest will not allow another person to touch his Abba Mula or sometimes even to see it, and he will not take it down from its shrine without first worshipping it and burning incense. Abba Mula has a permanent place in the hearts of the Ch'iang. One priest said to the writer with disapproval that "Mr. Torrance said that this was a temporary god until Jesus came."

354 776 We have noted the fact that one form of the Ch'iang stove has three legs. These are sacred and must not be touched. One often has a hole in it, and in this hole is a ring. This leg is the fire god, Mo Bo Sei or Mu Bu Sei. He controls the fire in the home and prevents it from burning the house. The second leg is Abba Sei. This is not the supreme god, but the male ancestor of the Ch'iang, who is worshipped and revered. The third is Ata Sei who is the female ancestor of the Ch iang and is worshipped as such. This is the triad of the Ch'iang.

776 There is a group of five greatest gods. They are

1. Mu Bya Sei, who is supreme.

2. Ru Be Sei, the earth god. He controls the earth, causes rain and good crops, protects people from illness and other calamities, and helps them.

3. Lolo Sei He controls the snow mountains and the shrubs and herbs that grow only a foot or two high near the snow line.

4. P'i Ru Sei. He controls the forests and large trees on the high mountains.

5. Su Mu Sei who also controls forests, and governs wild animals and fowls.

All these five are worshipped on the housetops and in the sacred groves, at least in some localities, at the same time that the highest god is worshipped.

There is a second group of twelve lesser gods.

1. Ji Gwe Sei, the family or house god who protects the home and its inhabitants.

2. Stu Ju Sei who controls and protects domestic animals, pigs, cows, sheep, goats, chickens, ducks, etc.

3. Ndzi Ju Sei He is a god of wealth controlling the finances of the home, gold, silver, money, etc.

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4. Yi Mu Sei. She gives sons, protects women when they have conceived and during childbirth, and protects children. 776

5. Mya Wei Sei who protects men and boys.

6. Sti P'r Sei who protects women and girls in matters not connected with childbirth.

7. Do Dzu Sei a door god who is on the right side and keeps demons out of the homes.

8. Nu Nga Sei a door god on the left side who helps keep out demons.

9. Sbe Pri Sei, the god of the bin who controls the five grains after they have been harvested and are in the house or in the bin.

10. Mo Bo Sei or Mu Bo Sei, the fire god who controls the fire in the home lest it burn up the house.

11. Abba Sei, the male ancestor.

12. Ata Sei, The female ancestor.

These are regarded as so distinctly Ch'iang gods that they are put into a different category than the Chinese gods whose images are worshipped in shrines, in homes and in temples. The pronunciation of the names of the gods as given above is that which was given us at Ta Ho P'in Chai, near Wen Ch'uan.

The above Ch'iang gods have no images.

There may be other gods that are regarded as Ch'iang, but at present we can not affirm it with certainty. Many Chinese gods, however, are commonly worshipped by the Ch'iang. Among them are the Pearly Emperor, Ch'uan Chu 川主, the Lord of Szechwan, Wang yeh 王爺 who is elsewhere the god of boatmen. The housegod 天地君親師位 meaning Heaven, Earth, Rulers, Relatives, Scholars, the T'ai Shan Shih Kan Tang 泰山石敢當, the T'u Ti 土地, Kuanyin, and many others. They are regarded by the Ch'iang as real, living deities.

4. The Priesthood.

The Ch'iang are a very reverent and devout people, and their religious ceremonies and rituals are considered to be very important. They must be performed with exactness and fitting decorum. Some of them are long. Since they have no written language their chants or songs, which they regard as the equivalents of sacred 793 538

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796 purpose for the offering of sacrifice. Rain, good crops, health, children, protection for the domestic animals, protection from the demons that cause disease and other calamities, as well as the benign fevor of the gods and heart-reviving communion with them, are among the things sought.

796 782 The burning of incense is a vital part of worship. Indeed, this seems true of all native religions in central Asia. The Ch'iang generally use cedar twigs, although sometimes incense sticks and candles are added. More rarely the leaves and twigs of two bushes and a large-leafed shrub that grow in very high altitudes are substituted for cedar twigs. The fragrant odor is believed to please the deity and cause him to be more propitious. Spirit money is sometimes burnt with the belief that burning transforms it into actual money that can be used in the spirit world.

Generally some unleavened bread is offered. Among the Ch'iang and other people in the highlands no bread is leavened, so the offering of unleavened bread was originally accidental

In most localities the goat offered is not a lamb, but a full-grown animal between three and six years old. It is usually white, but in many localities a dark-brown or black goat can be used. It must be of only one color, and unblemished—that is, its horns, ears, etc, must have no defect.

The shedding of blood is a natural part of the sacrifice. The blood is not shed for the remission of sins, but is a necessary part of the performance. After the sacrifices in the groves blood is generally sprinkled on the door of the temple to show that the sacrifice has been performed. When the sacrifice is on the housetop, blood is generally not sprinkled on the doorposts, and when it is done it is generally to frighten demons and to keep then from entering the house.

796 776 In some villages Mu Bya Sei is worshipped on the housetops on the first and on the fifteenth of each moon, and also on new year day and on some other days during the first month. In some localities the great gods are worshipped in the sacred groves three times, the first day of the sixth month, the first day of the eighth month, and the first day of the tenth month. but the tendency is to perform the sacrifices less frequently. There are villages in which it is performed only once a year.

796 778 On the days when the great ceremonies are performed in the sacred groves, and on the second and third days afterward no stranger must pass along the roads near the sacred grove nor enter

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174 important among them, was Kou P'in-shan, called Issac Wh t heart in Mr. Torrance's book, "The First Missionaries To China." Mr. Torrance became interested in the customs of the Ch'iang, and especially in their religion. He believed that he saw physical resemblances between the Ch'iang and the Hebrews, and also that there were close resemblances in their social and religious customs. Mr. Kou was also interested, and at Mr. Torrance's suggestion he travelled among the Ch'iang looking for parallels. Both Mr. Torrance and Mr. Kou became convinced that the Ch'iang were Hebrews. Mr. Kou wrote a short pamphlet in which he expressed some of his veiws, and Mr. Torrance later wrote his book, "The First Missionaries To China," in which he elaborately states his belief and his proofs. The research of Mr. Torrance and of Mr. Kou P'in-shan became subjective rather than objective, a seeking for facts to prove a theory, and Mr. Torrance's book is the finest example that the writer has ever seen of the results of subjective research in the interpretation of the life and customs of a somewhat primitive people. Facts have seemed to fit into theories when they really do not, resemblances have been exaggerated, and differences overlooked. The Ch'iang are a likeable people with some good characteristics and Mr. Torrance is to be commended for his sympathy and love for them, but that they are Hebrews is most unlikely, and the key to an understanding of their psychology, life, customs, and religion is a knowledge of the psychology of primitive people.

The following facts are worthy of note:—

[176] 1. The Ch'iang are not monotheists. In most localities they have at least seventeen gods that are considered to be Ch'iang, and it is certain that there is no place where there is not at least five. It is likely that the seventeen gods are known and worshipped all over the Ch'iang region. This does not include numerous Chinese gods that are worshipped almost everywhere.

[144] 2. There is not a single physical characteristic that would convince a physical anthropologist that they are Hebrews.

[771] 3. Their sacred ceremonies are not primarily for the forgiveness of sins, as is asserted in "The First Missionaries to China," although that is included.

[177] 4. The sacred cane shown opposite page 98 in "The First Missionaries To China," is a Mt. Omei pilgrim's walking-stick with the dragon head knocked off. Nowhere else in West China are such

when I noticed that my questions seemed suspicious to the Fantzu, and take up the thread another time or with another person. In many respects I might have penetrated more deeply into a /43/ knowledge of the religious thinking of the nomads if I had questioned a lama, and perhaps I would have been better informed. But in that case I could not have avoided getting the viewpoint of the priest, and would not have learned what were the most important things in the religious life of the laymen.

Chinese and Tibetan folk religions are very closely related. In both cases religious thinking centers around a belief in spirits, nature demons and the souls of the dead. Therefore the most important religious acts consist in propitiating these spirits which are everywhere, and in warding off the misfortune they might cause. This belief in spirits and the rituals accompanying it are, in both folk religions, combined with a very primitive belief in magic and with many other superstitions.

The Mewu-Fantzu distinguish between actual evil spirits (Tibetan: djäxe-dan or djir-dan) and the spirits of the dead which correspond to the Chinese kuei (Tibetan: dzeo). The evil spirits cause sickness of man and beast, and sometimes loss of money or war, against which in the folk religion the sorcerer (böm-bu, see below) must intervene (he corresponds to the Chinese exorcist), or the lama in the religion of Lamaism.

The kuei can bring the same kind of misfortune. Above all are feared the spirits of those who were killed in war or who met with some other violent form of death. The Mewu-Fantzu also believe in the existence of headless spirits which are particularly feared. As among the Chinese, there are people who believe they can see ghosts.

If a kuei brings on an illness, the victim is possessed by the kuei, and the böm-bu must /44/ drive him out. If the sorcerer has driven him out but has been unable to destroy him, the kuei likes to station himself at crossroads. Hence people avoid them, especially at night, and prefer to make a detour. The souls of the dead which enter into the body of an animal, according to the Buddhistic belief in the transmigration of souls, are also feared, especially, as we have said, if they have died a violent death.

There is also a lively belief in nature demons, - mountain spirits, earth spirits and water spirits. Earth spirits are everywhere, and correspond to the t'u-ti-shen of the Chinese. The earth spirit is called "sa-tja"; like t'u-ti, he has a wife. He lives in the valley, usually along water. If one offends earth spirits, they can revenge

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776 themselves by bringing sickness. If someone is suddenly seized with
753 violent internal pains, it is feared above all that the earth spirits have been offended. You can offend them by scratching up the earth, a belief which is strongly reminiscent of Chinese conceptions regarding feng-shui (geomancy).

778 I did not hear anything among the Mewu-Fantzu about water spirits, but in Labrang there is a sacred spring. Once as I was riding by, I saw four lamas slowly encircle this spring, amid song and drumbeat, a ceremony which is performed when the weather is unfavorable, particularly when it is too wet or too dry.

776 There is also a cult of tree spirits among the sedentary Mewu-Fantzu who live below the timber line.

Of the earth spirits in the narrower sense, we must distinguish mountain spirits. In Tibet, as in China, there are mountains whose spirits or gods are the objects of special veneration. The most notable among these is the Amne Machin range in the northeastern reaches of Tibet, about which little is known. /45/ In the large lamasery of He-tso which lies between Labrang and the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu, a friendly lama, one of the lamasery artists, made for me a beautiful picture of Amne Ma chin as a mounted male god surrounded by numerous other gods. (The picture was unfortunately lost in the chaos of war.)

In the more restricted area of the Mewu-Fantzu the mountain spirits known as "ami" who are pictured as living in the "obo," (1)

1. In re "obo" and "ami" see Rockhill, page 734. "obo" is a Mongolian word.

are the most venerated. It took me a long time and required many conversations before I was able to understand the whole complex of ideas surrounding the obo and its ami.

778 Every mountain on which there stands an obo (Tibetan: lab-dza) is particularly sacred. The obo of the nomadic Mewu-Fantzu consists of a wooden structure into which, year by year, sacrificial wooden darts are stuck, so that the obo looks like a bundle or bouquet of darts often more than two meters high. Twigs of bushes are also stuck into this bundle of darts. The darts vary in size, and may be a meter or more long. Every Fantzu visits the obo at least once a year and takes with him a wooden dart or the branch of a shrub as an offering. The t'ou-mu (chieftain) has the privilege of giving especially long darts. Tufts of sheep wool and khadaks are also stuck into the obo.

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stuck into the obo. 000

The ami who dwell in the obo are regarded as tutelary spirits of 776
man and beast; they guard against sickness, cattle diseases and other misfortunes, as for example, the threat of war. Among the sedentary Fantzu they not only protect the animals, but make the fields fertile as well. In war the ami are leaders and protect people against being wounded. Personal offerings are frequently made to the obo or the ami-spirit, especially when there is sickness in the family or when other misfortunes occur. For example, I observed four riders with two long /46/ wooden darts wound with juniper shrubs, place them on the obo near my tent.

Oddly enough, I was told that the ami can be very much disturbed by predatory animals (wolves, wildcats, foxes).

Once a year a general obo festival is held, when the largest num- 776
ber of darts and khadaks are offered. In time the weather destroys many darts, so that the obo only gradually increases in size.

It seems that the obo are erected on elevations that have been 778
held sacred since ancient times. At any rate, my interpreter Wang had never seen the erection of a new obo. However, the Fantzu say that the obo in the northeastern part of the territory is much older than the one in the northwest.

Each obo has its anniversary on a specific day of the year. In the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu there is a large obo that outranks the others, and is worshiped by the nomads as well as the sedentary Fantzu. Its anniversary is the 14th day of the 5th (Chinese) month. There are two more obo in the uplands, which are revered by the nomads only, and at a lower elevation three obo for the sedentary Mewu-Fantzu.

The cult of the obo is a noteworthy example of the syncretism 777
of folk religion and Lamaism: 778

The ami (mountain spirit) which is imagined as living in the 776
obo and which was without doubt an original element of Tibetan folk belief, has a strange relationship to the incarnations of Lamaistic religion. There is an obo for every lamasery, and it is erected on an elevation overlooking the confines of the lamasery, being to a certain extent analogous to the relationship of a Chinese pagoda to a district city. In the magical thinking of the Tibetans the ami dwelling in the obo is related to an incarnation (fu-yeh, huo-fu). Thus there exists in some measure a mystical trinity - obo, incarnation and its corresponding Buddha or Bodhisattva of the Western paradise. /47/ As a result, certain festivals are celebrated at the

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obo and in the lamasery on identical days of the year.

The day of the obo festival is also celebrated as the birthday of fu-yeh. My interpreter, trying to make clear to me the relationship between obo and fu-yeh, once compared the obo with a p'ai-wei, i. e., a Chinese ancestral tablet, since the deceased fu-yeh is thought of as dwelling in the obo as well as in the Western paradise.

On New Year's, on the fourth day of the first Chinese month, to be exact, a festival is held in the temple of the lamasery. On this occasion fireworks are set off in honor of the deceased incarnations. At the same time there is a festival at the obo to invoke the mountain spirit. On this occasion butter, tea, a wether (!) and cypress wood are sacrificed. A piece of meat from each of the four extremities and the breast, the ears and the lower jaw are burned with the cypress wood, to indicate that in reality the entire animal has been sacrificed. This offering is made in order to safeguard man and beast and protect the country from war. Thus Lamaistic religious practices are here combined with animal sacrifice which stands in sharp contrast to actual Buddhism. (1)

1. Schröder's 8) account of the mountain spirit of the Tujen in the Sining region is very noteworthy for the manifold combinations which the spirit inhabiting the obo can take on: "The mountain spirit is bound to a certain locale and has its stronghold, its permanent dwelling, in the obo. It can enter the shaman as an assistant spirit, and take possession of him in a trance. The earth god also has its dwelling in the obo; it is in the layer of earth."

It is also characteristic for the syncretism of folk religion and Lamaism that sorcerers (böm-bu) as well as lamas can offer sacrifices at the obo.

Whereas the ami living in the obo are tutelary spirits of the entire tribe, each family also venerates special guardian spirits within their tent. These might be compared to the ancient Roman lares familiares. My Chinese interpreter called them Chia-shen (house gods, Tibetan: Yu-la). (1) There are no images of them.

1. However, compare Hermanns, page 48.

Instead, a bunch of hair from various animals hangs in the left rear

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corner of the /48/ tent, which is the home of Yu-la. The fur of all kinds of domestic animals is used, and a tuft of hair is plucked out of each animal for this purpose before it is sold or slaughtered. Thus the bundle constantly increases in size. After a meal, tea, butter, and milk are smeared on the bundle of hair for the house god.

On the altar which is found in every tent stand small statues made of bronze or brass of the Lamaistic deities. The god that seems to be most popular here is called Dzam-la. He corresponds, allegedly, to Ts'ai-shen, the god of wealth (2) of the Chinese popular religion; in accordance with Lamaistic custom, water is regularly offered to this god. Another god much venerated is one that is thought of as dwelling in hell and judging the souls of the dead. He corresponds to the Chinese Yen-lo-wang. The "horse god" (Chinese: Ma-wang-yeh, Tibetan: dam-dzen) who is also worshiped in the Lamaistic temples is offered sacrifices by the sorcerers, especially when there is threat of war. He has three heads and is represented in union with its Cakti (female principle). Ts'ai-shen and Chia-shen are worshiped by men and women alike.

2. Compare Wadell, page 370.

I did not learn anything about a worship of the heavens among the Fantzu, nor of the sun, moon and stars.

After death the soul of the deceased can turn into an evil spirit. It can descend into hell (Tibetan: nal-wa), where it is adjudicated by the judge of hell (Yen-lo-wang, Yama). But just as in China, there is a parallel belief in Buddhistic transmigration of souls, and no one is aware of any inconsistency. If a person has led a good life, he can be reborn as an incarnation (fu-yeh), if he has been bad, he becomes a woman or an animal (bovine, horse, ox, sheep). Here the belief in the transmigration of souls is sometimes confused with the belief in evil spirits into which the souls of persons who have died a violent death are transformed.

/49/ A characteristic incident had just occurred among the Mewu-Fantzu:

The t'ou-mu of the Mewu-Fantzu had a younger brother with whom he had quarreled seven or eight years before about the rule of a group of Fantzu. He had had the brother treacherously killed one day when the latter was riding across the steppes. A short time afterwards, groundhogs dug a passage behind the t'ou-mu's house with an opening inside the enclosure of his property. This was a surprising

direction of their sorcerers and elders. This, this writer believes, is the most valuable part of the Ch'iang culture.

/10/ Although the material life and the social system of the Ch'iang are more Sinicized, yet we can still find in them some characteristics of the Ch'iang culture. The Ch'iang tribesmen are now mostly farmers, but they have not yet abandoned the habit of "shepherds". It is said that before the Communists' invasion, their pastoral economy was often more important than their agriculture. Judging from the fact that the Ch'iang tribesmen now remain both pastoral and agricultural, we may say that the statement in history books that the Ch'iang tribesmen were either aborigines or immigrants is reliable They have not changed the custom of "living beside a hill and building houses with stones," nor have they changed their anarchic and classless social order, if this is what is meant by the "non-existence of king-subject and superior-inferior relationships." As to the assertion that "they have no definite family names, some use their father's given names and mother's surnames as their family names," it is also attested by the names of ruined places which were derived from family names, and by the way they adopt their individual names. Economically, the Ch'iang obviously have reached the stage of having family units. Yet, from the standpoint of their custom of working together and their spirit of mutual concern, they retain some habits of the clan age. Also, according to the marriage code, the clan is still a unit in exogamy. (People of the same clan are not allowed to marry each other.)

Nowadays a Ch'iang village is no longer identical with a clan. There are several different clans in almost every village. (It is said that before the Manchus conquered Ching-ch'uan, there were still some villages with only one clan.) However, each village has its specific local god, sorcerers, and festival activities. This is due to the fact that the traditional culture has not changed although the composition of the village population has. There are many cases like this in anthropology. Now let us take a look at the content of the cultural heritage of the Ch'iang tribesmen.

## I. Analysis of the Gods Worshiped by the Ch'iang

The Ch'iang are a ghost-and god-worshiping people. They believe that there are gods everywhere, such as family gods, local gods, and the individual or local guardian gods. If divided according to their nature, there are good gods and evil spirits, if classified in

776 accordance with their appearance, they may be the images we see in a dream, the shape of a particular thing, or without any shape at all. The corner of the clothes, the dirt on the human body, the air we exhale, insects, fallen leaves, any animal, or any man-made article can all represent gods. In a word, the Ch'iang beliefs remain in the stage of animsim and fetishism. Some say that the Ch'iang beliefs have reached the stage of monotheism. (1) This

1. T. Torrance, "The Basic Spiritual Conceptions of the Religion of the Ch'iang," (Lecture delivered to the West China Border Research Society, May 12, 1924). In this article, the author considers the Ch'iang as a monotheistic people like the Jews and denies that the Ch'iang have animism.

view is not correct. Moreover, the fact that the Ch'iang have sorcerers and sorcery fits into this kind of beliefs. If there were no such beliefs, the Ch'iang sorcerers and sorcery would have no reason for their existence. The so-called witchcraft religion is the general term for this kind of beliefs and sorcery. There are numerous examples like this among primitive peoples of the world.

1. The White Stone God and the Sacred Forest

[212] 776 773 The Ch'iang tribesmen have only a spoken language but no written one. Therefore, so far as their past is concerned, we have to search for it among their folk songs, stories, and legends. The origin of the beliefs in the White Stone God and the Sacred Forest can also be found in their legends and folk songs. According to legends, the Ch'iang once had a great migration, in which they were scattered in all directions. A group of them, after having settled down, met a rival tribe called "Ko-jen" (2) who were dumb but

2. "Ko" is a phonetic transcription. The Ch'iang's victory over the Ko-jen was a crucial event in their national regeneration. So, up to now, the Ch'iang are still very happy to talk about it. It is said that the physiological traits of the Ko tribesmen are: big and hard bones; high eyebrow bones; a high forehead; teeth as big as a thumb; a very thick skull; a very short neck; hairs as

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dark and thick as a horse's mane; eyes always looking up and unable to look horizontally which can be done only by bowing the head; vertical eyes; and a tail which indicates the approaching of death by its gradual withering. From the social and cultural point of view, the Ko tribesmen raised no cattle; knew how to sow but were not good at reaping; ate fruits, grass and roots; took rain and dew for drink; did not know how to make fire by striking stones (they tried to learn it from the Ch'iang but failed); had no spirit of cooperation; lived in caves; and, after death, were buried in bottomless stone coffins. It is difficult to determine what race the Ko were. We can only preserve their legends and wait for the investigation later by scholars.

strong. The Ch'iang were afraid of them and were thinking of running away from them. Fortunately, in their dreams, the Ch'iang received from a god a revelation which showed them how to fight the war. The Ch'iang followed the god's direction and annihilated the Ko tribe. The method revealed by the god to defeat the Ko was quite simple, that is, first using hard clubs and then white stones. The Ko tribe was annihilated and the Ch'iang were then able to live happily in peace. So the people gave cheers such as "We are fine, we are happy, we are strong..." The leader of the Ch'iang was afraid that the people might fall into the abyss of "dying of peace and pleasure" and suggested to repay the god for his blessings so as to show their gratitude to the source of their happiness and also to warn the people of their danger. However, the people knew only that their ancestors received a revelation from the god. /11/ They did not know what god it was, nor did they know how the god looked like. So they said, "We call the god but the god cannot answer. What should we call the god?" Their leader asked, "What weapons did our ancestors use to defeat the Ko?" The people answered, "With hard clubs and white stones we beat the Ko." The leader said, "Since we beat the Ko with white stones, we should return our thanks to the white stones." All the people agreed and each brought back a white stone. The leader then said, "The white stone is our god. From now on whenever you have troubles or difficulties, you may pray to

776 the White Stone God. The god, to whom the Ch'iang wanted to
773 give thanks, was the one who directed them to defeat the Ko. Since the god had no concrete appearance, they used the white stone as a symbol. After all, the white stone was the weapon with which they defeated the enemies at the god's direction. Here we see that the Ch'iang worship of the white stone has a profound meaning and an historical basis.

776 The Ch'iang people now use the term "White Stone God," or rho-pi-tzé. It seems as if they regard the white stone as god. Actually, the white stone is only a symbol of god, and not a god by itself. What we should like to find out is what god it was who helped the Ch'iang defeat the Ko. The legends give no explanation of such a god. As the Ch'iang people, having met the god only in dreams, did not know while awake who the god was, so they said, "He is the protector; but who is he?" And they also said, "He is God." Here we see the people actually did not know what god he was. However, there is no doubt that the Ch'iang tribesmen have always regarded this god as their guardian deity ever since their victory over the Ko. (3) /The figure 3 for Note 3 is missing in the text. I presume this is

3. Now in Li-fan hsien, at Hou-yu-k'u-shang-san-li, among the nine gods on the roof of the Ch'iang, one is the god of directing war called Ta-la. According to what is said, this is the god who directed the victorious war against the Ko. This saying, this writer suspects, is a later addition, for different gods are worshiped on the roofs in different places but there is only one legend of the Ch'iang like this.

the logical place for it. -- translator's note./

According to legends, the Ch'iang once abandoned their worship of the white stones. This was the period when "men did not worship gods and gods did not care for men." The Ch'iang then returned to their worship of the Forest God, or mei-be-tzé. (It is said that before they worshiped the White Stone God, the Ch'iang worshiped this god.)
[782] There was a definite code of ceremony--sacrificing a lamb, spreading its blood, but prohibiting the eating of its flesh which was either burned to ashes or thrown away in the wilderness. They also composed a standard version of benediction. Sacrifice was held in the Sacred Forest regardless of the weather. Later they built a public temple called wa-gi.

976 The Ch'iang legends consider this Forest God extremely potent. He must be worshiped with a lamb and a sacrificial service. He could make barren those lands where he was not worshiped, and he could make people sick. Therefore the Ch'iang everywhere worshipped the Forest God. Once he told the Ch'iang in a dream, explaining to them his position among gods. He said, "I am not the only god. Besides me, there is the God of Heaven, mei-da-be." People asked, "Who is the God of Heaven and where to worship him?" He answered, "The white stone you worshiped at the top of your house represents the God of Heaven." People asked, "We have known that the white stone represents the God of Heaven. But where should be the place of the white stone in the Sacred Grove?" He answered, "Behind the highest temple, erect a white stone on a stone seat to represent the God of Heaven. Inside the temple, in a niche in the wall, place a white stone to represent the God of Earth. (Different names are used in different places.) Behind the stove in the temple, erect a white stone to represent the God of Fire, mūn-kuei-tzé. During the service day, branches of cypress must be burned and a piece of fir wood is planted behind the God of Heaven....." This dialogue has now become the code of ceremony of the Ch'iang. At the same time, the passage explains that white stones may represent different kinds of gods. But the white stone at the top of the house represents the God of Heaven. The Ch'iang's perplexity about this white stone is now clarified.

From the aforesaid, we can see the meaning of the white stone in the Ch'iang beliefs. What the Ch'iang worship, however, are not the white stones themselves but the Gods of Heaven, Earth, Forest, and Fire. The Ch'iang perhaps have had this kind of belief for a considerably long period of time. One of the Ch'iang's ancient folk songs says: (4)

539 4. Words of the entire song are as follows:
"The greatest are Heaven and Earth,
Next to them is the Sacred Forest:
Wild beasts beating stones on the cliff,
Fir trees and birch trees,
Grasses flourishing, lakes deep,
Mountains high, the land big,
Remember, remember! "
This is one of the songs sung by the Ch'iang at Shang-shui-li in Wen-ch'uan after sacrificing a

539 lamb to the Sacred Forest for the New Year celebration on the first day of the tenth month /of the lunar calendar./

"The greatest are Heaven and Earth,
/12/ Next to them is the Sacred Forest."

2. Gods on the Roof and Inside the Stone House.

•776 [342] The top of a Ch'iang house is like the roof garden of a Western house. In the center is an agricultural and pastoral workshop. Along the walls are places for worshiping gods. There are gods on every roof of a Ch'iang house, but the number of gods on each roof may be different. For example, at Lo-pu-chai in Wen-ch'uan hsien, there are on the roof of a Ch'iang house five gods, represented by five pieces of white stones.

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|---|---|
| 1) Mo-pǐ-tzé | God of Heaven |
| 2) Rü-bü-tzè | God of Earth |
| 3) Tzǔk-si | God of Mountains (God who sustains the earth) |
| 4) Sǐ | Goddess of Mountains |
| 5) Si-wa | Lord Kuan. |

In Li-fan, the Ch'iang at Hou-erh-k'u and Shang-san-li worship nine gods on their roofs:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1) A-pä-mǔbe-da | God who created Heaven and Earth. |
| 2) Rǔbe-we-ngi-tzè | Goddess of Earth. |
| 3) Dsu-rǔ-pee | God of Redeeming Vows and Opening Roads. |
| 4) Abe-shi-gai-ki | God of Mountains (Different Mountain Gods in different places). |
| 5) Bò-wa-tzè | God of Building Houses. |
| 6) Ta-là | God of Directing War (who showed the Ch'iang the way to defeat the Ko.) |
| 7) Shgee | Door God of Heaven (who will take care of everything.) |
| 8) Mǔ-gee | The Wise Man in the Ch'iang |

legends, who first understood and represented the will of God to lead the Ch'iang to victory.

9) Hā-hä-be — God of Winter Preservation or God of the Completion of Four Seasons.

In some places, there are only three or four white stones on the roof, which of course, mean that there are only three or four gods. From the Ch'iang legends, we know the most important god on the roof is probably the white stone which represents the God of Heaven. The Ch'iang nowadays all recognize that the place to offer public sacrifice to the White Stone God is in the Sacred Forest and that the place for private sacrifice is on the roof. According to the aforesaid origin of the white stone cult, the white stones both on the roof and in the Sacred Forest represent the God of Heaven. Others occupy perhaps only secondary positions. Therefore, people in different villages may freely increase or reduce their number.

Inside their houses, the Ch'iang probably everywhere worship a total of twelve gods. But there are quite some differences in the names of those gods in different places as well as in the pronunciation of those names. For instance, according to the Great Tuan-kung Chu of Hsing-shang-chai in Li-fan, they are:

1) Bo-jé — The Ancestor of Mankind.
2) Yei-tzé — God of Fortune
3) Hi-tu-tzé — God of Sheep.
/13/ 4) Htié-to — God of Showing the Way to Heaven (or God of Revelation.)
5) Tchŭ-tso-péi-tchei — God of Eliminating Poison in the Water Jar.
6) Mó-kuei-tzé — God of Fire (Mo-kuei-tze, Wei-tze or Parents' Souls, and Lei-tze or God of Fuel are the three Gods who occupy a triangular position which is originally the simplest stove built with three

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stones by the Ch'iang. Besides, there is a god called Ko-tchei-tze, or God of Shading the Fire, which means the wooden board above the stove used for shading the flame.)

7) Ü-mŭ — Ancestors (ancestors of the family.)

8) Tsee-tze — God of Mountains (guaranteeing against collapse or fall.)

9) Ngi-yu — God of the Central Pillar.

10) Lu-ngä — Door God.

11) Wei-ko-tzé — God of Cattle (God of the Ranch).

12) Rŭ-gee-tzé — God of Farm Boundary.

The Ch'iang in Wen-ch'uan also worship twelve gods. But at Lo-pu-chai there are, among the twelve gods, Yu-mo-tze, or God of Granary; H chu tchi, or God of Controlling Ghosts; Mie, a God Ruling over Men; and Si, a God Ruling over Women. (At Ts'u-t'u-chai in Wen-ch'uan, the God of Men is called Ti-pre and the God of Women, Mia-wei.) There are no Gods of Mountains, Farm Boundary, Cattle, and Eliminating Poison in the Water Jar. A few other points also deserve our attention. In many places where there is no God of Sheep, there is often a Buddha of the King of Cows. The housewife is in charge of the sacrifice to the God of Granary. The Door God is believed to be Chiang Tzu-ya (just like Lord Kuan on the roof). In some places (such as western Mao-hsien) they have forgotten the twelve gods except the Ancestors, the Kitchen God, the Land God, the God of Fortune, and Lord Heaven. Those who are more Sinicized will place the spirit tablets of Heaven, Earth, Emperor, Parents and Teachers right inside the front door. The twelve gods in the house seem to represent the traditional beliefs of the Ch'iang particularly on the following four points:

(1) Apart from the family ancestors, there are ancestors of mankind.
(2) The God of Fire and those gods associated with him.
(3) The God of Men and the God of Women. (This may be transformed from either the guardian god of individuals or the sexual totem.)

•776 (4) Women in charge of the sacrifice to the God of Granary. (This may be considered as a custom derived from women's association with agriculture.)

3. Local Gods

We have mentioned before that in the old times each clan of the Ch'iang tribesmen lived in a village of their own. Nowadays a Ch'iang village is not necessarily confined to a clan. However, in each locality there are local gods, sorcerers and ceremonies. It is to be noted that the local gods can be classified into male and female deities, or good and evil spirits. Because of the threats and blessings of those gods, sorcerers become an indispensable profession. Based upon our survey, we select among the good and evil gods of different localities the following examples so as to give a general picture of them.

/14/ Examples of good gods:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| La-hua-chai | Be-mée-tzé | God of the Master /of the House/. |
| Hua-peng-chai | Wa-ba-tzé | God of City Wall. |
| Wen-shan-chai | Ü-nga-tzé | God of Peacock. |
| Tseng-t'ou-shang-chai | Shi-gu-tzé | God of Iron Mountain. |
| Tseng-t'ou-chung-chai | Lü-wa-tzé | God of Communication. |
| Tseng-t'ou-hsia-chai | Sha-bo-tzé | God of Piled Stones (stones piled together). |
| Jo-ta-chai | Mu-be-tzé | God of Pine Trees. (sacrifices held jointly with Chia-shan-chai and Hsi-shan-chai.) |
| Shui-t'ien-chai | H-kuei-dee-tze | God of the Carried-back Cock. (Joint sacrifice with Ch'i-li-chai.) |
| Kan-ch'i-chai | Ru-bou-tze | God of Deep Cliff. |

776 Each local god has a legend of his origin. Take the following
723 examples:

The Legend of the Origin of the Local God in Shui-t'ien-chai and Ch'i-li-chai--A man from Shui-t'ien-chai and another from Ch'i-li-chai worked together as carriers. One day, passing Yu-ch'i (the Ch'iang call Yu-ch'i "Hunsh"), on their way home, the two felt their burden very heavy. As they were grumbling, they heard suddenly

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773 the crowing of a cock. They turned their heads and saw a white cock. But as they walked back to look at it closely, they found that it was a white stone. So they left it alone and went away. They did not get far before they heard again the crowing. So they turned back again, and again saw the white stone. Thus they walked back and forth several times. Finally, they prayed to the white stone, "White stone, if you are a god, please lighten our burden. We are willing to carry you back home." Then they carried the stone back and felt their burden very light indeed. When they reached the suspension rope /bridge/ at T'ung-hua-ch'ang (the Ch'iang call it Wa dee), they tried in vain several times to tie the stone on the rope. Suddenly, they saw the white stone turn into a cock that flew and alighted on the slope at Shui-t'ien-chai, and there became again a white stone. But, still it looked like a cock from a distance. The two told their fellow villagers about it. They were all surprised and so worshiped it as a god.

The Legend of the Origin of the Local God at Chia-shan, Jo-ta, and Hsi-shan--In ancient times, in the land of "gi-da", there lived six or seven clans (rŭglŭlŭgo; rorobe; wȧgo, now Chia-shan; jio-da, now Jo-ta; yar-ba-da; thĭ-ru-be; i-zu̧-wȧ-be) in close neighborhood. Pine trees flourished there and people chopped down their branches at random. Therefore, the God of Pine Trees told the villagers in their dreams, "I am the God of Pine Trees. If you chop down pine trees carelessly, I will punish you." Having had this dream, the people found themselves in a predicament. They asked among themselves where their source of income would be if they did not chop down trees. There were so many pine trees, and they had no way to know which trees belonged to the God. Therefore, those who did not believe in the God still went to the mountains to chop down trees. But from time to time, unfortunate accidents happened to them. One year after the fall harvest, an old man was seen walking to and fro in the forest and then suddenly disappeared. People believed that the God of Trees had come. So they made a vow and asked the tuan-kung /priest/ to offer sacrifice in the temple of the Sacred Forest. During the sacrificial ceremony, while the programs were going on, a participant of the ceremony was suddenly seized with a frenzy and declared, "I am working for God. You do not know where the God's tree is, but I know it." Then he took a large flag and climbed up a big tree. He reached the top of the tree, planted the flag on the top, and came down safely to the ground. He also declared that from now on sacrifice to the God of Trees should be held every year so that their land

776 773 would be safe and peaceful. Not long afterwards, the man's frenzy /15/ disappeared and he was himself again. People were in sympathy with him and gave him a lamb's kidney and a bottle of oil used in the sacrifice.

The Legend of the Origin of the Local God in Kan-ch'i--Kan-ch'i-chai originally had a temple of the King of Chickens (Yu-i-nga). It was destroyed by mountain torrents and not restored because of the lack of funds. The Chicken King was therefore moved to the backyard of the Temple of King Yu at Wen-shan-chai in T'ung-hua. People in Kan-ch'i still went there to pray and sacrifice every year, but they felt that the Chicken King was no longer efficacious. A patient who also felt that the Chicken King no longer had protective power suggested that the sacrifice be stopped. However, a devoted worshiper insisted that the Chicken King was still effective. He went alone to the God of the Chicken King at Wen-shan and prayed for the above mentioned patient, saying: "You are our original local god. The patient in our village hopes that you will still protect him!" The night after his return from praying he and the patient received a revelation from the God of the Chicken King in their dreams. The god said, "I am now no longer your god. I can protect you temporarily. The name of your god is ru-bou-tze. He will arrive here on the mountain in the eighth month of the next year. Under a rock there is water. He will come out of the water." The next morning the two told each other of their dreams and went together to find the spot which evidently was there. Later, the patient recovered. The harvest that year was very rich. The two could not forget what the god had revealed to them in the dreams and often walked to and fro beside the water even before the coming of the eighth month in the hope of seeing the arrival of the god. For a long time they did not see anything. One day they again heard the god say to them in a dream, "Ru-bou-tze, your god, has been drifting on the water for half a month!" Waking up, they asked a waterside wood-cutter about it. The wood-cutter said, "There has been indeed a piece of wood floating on the water for a long time and I could not catch it." The next day the two got a piece of wood beside the river and suspected that it was the god. But the wood was rotten. Some spectators suggested to have it cut and burned, but the two said that since they had dreamed about it, it should not be treated carelessly. That night they got another dream from the god. The god said, "I am in the wood. Peel off the rotten wood outside and you will see my body." They did so the next day and got an image of the god. Now people in Kan-ch'i substitute this god for the Sacred Forest, and they no longer erect a white stone.

Examples of Evil Gods:

776 Hsing-shang-na-wa ts'un — Li-zé-sié — God of Strange Vines in the Corners of a Farm.

Ah-t'i-hua — Kabre-po-sié — God of Bushes under the Rock.

Hua-peng and La-heh chai's — La-ge-po-sié — God of Strange Forests in the Corners of the Land.

Li-mu-chi and Chi-erh-wa chai's — Yǐ-ta-sié — God of a Strange Stone Resembling a Chicken Pecking Food.

Ma-peng-chai — Ba-ta-sié — Strange God above the Dam.

Mu-erh-ta — Dse-tche-ba-sié — God of Thorny Dam.

Chai-liu-chai — Hngi-gee-po-sié — God of Old Red Trees.

Mu-kung-chai — Dza-gee-kua-sié — Strange God of Broken House Foundation.

Chiu-tza-chai — Man-dio-sié — God of Cliff.

Li-fan (Pao-hsien) — Tsai-zé-tcha-tǐ sié — God of Drinking Wine and Eating Meat.

T'ung-hua — Tso-ge-po sié — God of Gleditschia Sinensis.

K'ung-ti-p'ing — Tcha-se ra-kǔ-cha sié — God of Stone Bridge and Rugged Cliff.

Tseng-t'ou-shang-chai — Sagta-lagbo sié — God of the Slope at the End of the Outpost.

Tseng-t'ou-chung-chai /16/ — Tsa-tshi-po sié — God of Thorns.

Tseng-t'ou-hsia-chai — Ko-bo-tsi-bo sié — God of Stone Piles and Forests.

Chu-erh-shan-chai — Dsǔ-be-dá sié — God under a Mud Pit.

776 796 Every year, from the middle of the first month to the end of the second month, the Ch'iang tribesmen asked the tuan-kung to exorcise the evil gods on the four days of the boar, dog, dragon, and horse. Mixing the flour of buckwheat or oats with the water used for washing the faces of the whole family, they make a plateful of images of ghosts and devils. Then mixing wheat flour with clean water, they make another plateful of sacrificial offerings to good gods. Wearing a monkey-skin hat, striking a spade, burning pine branches, and chanting the liturgies, the tuan-kung calls on good and bad spirits as he performs his exorcism. (Based upon the oral statements of Tuan-kung Chu of Hsing-shang-chai.)

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is hung a little flag made of fir wood. At the same time, disciples of other tuan-kung also participate in the performance. But they need only thrust the flag, not the knife /into the mouth/. Only the tuan-kung who has performed the teacher-honoring ceremony is qualified to wear the monkey-skin hat. 791

What is mentioned above gives a general idea of the origin of the tuan-kung, his attirements and instruments, and his magic power and instruction. As to the various functions of the Ch'iang tuan-kung, there are many and it takes a long time to enumerate them all. I shall discuss briefly a few cases in the following chapter dealing with examples of the Ch'iang practices, while a discussion of the details must wait until some other time.

## III. Examples of the Ch'iang Practices

The Ch'iang tribesmen believe in ghosts and gods. They are sometimes lenient and sometimes severe. All diseases, poverty, famine, and other misfortunes have something to do with the attitude of those ghosts and gods. Whenever people meet such crises, they ask the tuan-kung for help. The tuan-kung is a person who, on the one hand, deals with ghosts and gods and, on the other hand, promotes the well-being of the people. He has the magic to cure diseases, to exorcise evil spirits, to eliminate plagues, to increase fecundity, and to do many other things. All the Ch'iang believe in such magic. The tuan-kung may also participate in capping, wedding, and funeral ceremonies. However, there are also many other important programs which have nothing to do with the tuan-kung. For instance, the act of praying for rain, which, it seems, ought to be a favorite job of the tuan-kung, is however entirely a practice of the people among the Ch'iang tribesmen. 776 791

**Curing Diseases**--People who believe in ghosts and gods consider all diseases as caused by their evil workings. Frazer, an English anthropologist, calls the disease which is caused by the evil influence of ghosts and gods "devil-disease." Even today in China there remains the habit of calling all diseases "devil-diseases." This is undoubtedly a custom handed down from ancient times. The Dyak people of Oceania say that diseases are caused by devils that possess the human body, by the attack of evil spirits, or by the capture of one's soul by the devil. The Savara people of India regard all diseases as the evil workings of their ancestors or other ghosts and gods. /19/ Besides, the Winnebago people of America, the 753

2: Rock K-5 (1934- ) 1947 AF16 Southwest China AF16
Sino-Tibetan Border AE3



represented sitting European fashion, with legs down and not crossed as is otherwise the case in images of Buddha. He is adorned like a prince and is always in the attitude of teaching the law. The Yung-ning image (PLATE 228) is three stories or about 30 feet high. It was constructed by Hsiang-ch'eng Tibetans and the interior of the image is filled with Tibetan Classics. The lamasery of Mu-li possesses an equally large image but of heavily gilt copper. Maitreya is considered to be of gigantic size, hence the monster statues erected of him. He is the Chinese Mi-le fo 彌勒佛.

The lama temple is surrounded by rows of small mud-brick houses, the homes of the lamas when in attendance, but usually empty. The entire compound is surrounded by a tamped earth wall with a west, east, and south gate. This wall was built since 1924 as a protection against the Gangkar-ling bandits who dwell to the north-west of Yung-ning, and who have invaded Yung-ning on several occasions for the purpose of looting and burning.

*Morality.* — The moral state of the Hli-khin population is certainly a peculiar one. The word father is unknown, and it is next to an insult to inquire of a Hli-khin boy as to the whereabouts of his father. They all say they have no father. They all possess an A-gv (maternal uncle); this may be the brother of their mother or their actual father, without their being certain who their father is. They know and acknowledge only an A-gv. This is brought about by the peculiar conditions prevailing among the lamas of Yung-ning. They do not live in the lamasery, but only come to it on important occasions, as at annual festivals, lama dances, etc., or when specially called together by the abbot, who is a son of the late T'u-ssu. At other times they live at their homes where there is no supervision, and as they are supposed to be celibates they do not marry. The result is a horde of illegitimate children who know no father. Furthermore, the reverse of Chinese marital relations prevail among the lay population. In Yung-ning it is the girl who remains in the home, and she takes unto herself a boy as husband whom she keeps as long as he works, and as long as she enjoys his presence. She can send him away at any time, and take unto herself another husband. Her brother, if she has one, may remain with her and he takes the place of the father, and it is he who is addressed as A-gv. The result of this promiscuous sexual intercourse is an enormous amount of syphilis and other venereal diseases. The moral standard of Yung-ning is thus anything but high. Suicide, so common among the Li-chiang Na-khi is, however, totally unknown among the Yung-ning people.[4] (PLATE 229).

## 2. FROM YUNG-NING TO FENG-K'O ON THE YANGTZE

*Kublai Khan's camp.* — From the Yung-ning Lamasery the road leads past the old school-house half-way between the monastery and the village of K'ai-chi to a famous and historic spot on the Hli gyi (K'ai-chi River). It is the Jih-yüeh-ho 日月和 (Union of Sun and Moon) (PLATE 212). In

[4] *See:* J. F. ROCK, The Romance of K'a-mä-gyu-mi-gkyi in *B.E.F.E.-O.* T. XXXIX, 1939, pp. 1–152.